



What Goes on the Clothesline?

We invite women to send shirts, blouses, or T-shirts of durable material preferably of the following basic colors:

White for women who have died of violence

Yellow, Beige, or Tan for women who have been physically assaulted or battered

Pink, Red, or Orange for women who have been raped or sexually assaulted as adults

Blue or Green for women survivors of incest or child sexual abuse

Purple or Lavender for women attacked because of their sexual preference

Gray or Silver for women survivors of emotional, verbal, or economic abuse

Black for women who experience political abuse

These colors are not mandatory if a particular color or pattern has a special significance to you; the colors are used as a general visual representation of the types of violence directed at women.

To Arrange a Display

Please contact us if you would like to arrange a display of the *Clothesline Project*. We require advance publicity for any events at which the Clothesline will be displayed to help ensure that women whose shirts are shown will not come upon the Clothesline unprepared

Some Facts about Violence Against Women

- Before the age of 19, 1 out of 3 girls and 1 out of 7 boys will be victims of incest or sexual assault.
- In the fiscal year 2003 (July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003), over 3,900 women and children in this state sought safety at a domestic violence shelter or safe home. More than 40,000 restraining orders were issued, and every domestic violence hotline in the state answered an increased number of emergency calls. Tragically, Massachusetts saw an almost 50% increase in the number of domestic violence homicides, as 21 women, men, and children were murdered. Five of these people were children, the youngest only five years old. These numbers do not represent faceless statistics, but instead represent countless lives that have been affected by the horrors of domestic violence and sexual assault. (Jane Doe, Inc. <http://www.janedoe.org/know.htm>)



SOMERVILLE COMMISSION FOR WOMEN



The Clothesline Project

Somerville Commission for Women

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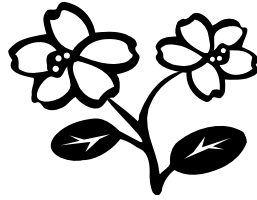
The Clothesline Project

The *Clothesline Project* is a visual display of shirts hung on a line. Each shirt is decorated to represent a particular woman's personal experience about violence directed at her, be whether it is interpersonal violence, rape, incest, and/or sexual abuse. The shirts are made by survivors themselves, friends or family of survivors or by loved ones for those who have died as a result of these crimes.

The *Somerville Commission for Women adopted the Clothesline Project of Somerville, one of the first in the nation and the first in Greater Boston*, as a tribute to the survivors and as a memorial for victims from the city of Somerville, MA and surrounding towns. It started with six shirts in the spring of 1991 and is part of a national network.

The Purpose of the Project is four-fold:

- to bear witness to the survivors, as well as, the victims of violence against women
- to aid in the healing process for survivors or for people who have lost loved one
- to educate, document, and raise society's awareness of the existence, frequency, and magnitude of violence against women
- to provide a safe place for survivors to express themselves and to provide information as part of a nationwide network



Every minute of the day more than one woman is raped in America. (U.S. Justice Department)

tribute. Any remembrance is appropriate, whether simple or elaborate, painted or sewn. You may wish to include a name, date, or memorabilia, such as symbols or interests, or tools of a trade. Some suggestions for ensuring the durability of your shirt include:

- Use natural fabrics
- sew rather than use glue, when possible
- use acrylic or textile paints
- use color-fast or indelible inks

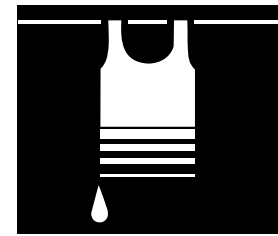
photocopy photographs or text onto iron-on transfers and then iron onto fabric

Survivors' Shirts

Because making a shirt is part of the healing process for survivors of violence, shirts should be submitted by the survivor herself. If that is not possible, a shirt made by a family member or friend for or about a survivor should be submitted with her written permission. Name and hometown are not required on the shirt unless the woman wished to have them included. We would appreciate any additional information you or she would like to share. Requests for confidentiality will be respected.

Creating a Shirt

Each shirt should reflect something of the woman's personal experience. You do not have to be artistic to create a moving, personal



Memorial Shirts

You may wish to submit a shirt that belonged to the woman who has died. Please include on the shirt the woman's name, date of birth and death, and hometown.

Once the shirt is complete, please take some time to write a description of the person you have memorialized. Tell us what this person meant to you and how you think she should be remembered. Enclose a photograph of the person if you are willing to part with it (we can't be responsible for returning items.)

Names on Shirts

Survivors need not identify themselves by name on their shirts; one can choose to do so or not. Naming the perpetrator is an important part of the healing process. For legal reasons, however, we cannot display shirts with full names of perpetrators. We ask that shirt makers use only first names or initials if they wish to identify their violator(s).

Shirt Making Events

The *Clothesline Project of Somerville* sponsors open shirt-making events throughout the year. Women are invited to come and design a shirt at these events. Materials are provided. To find out the next scheduled time, call us at (617) 625-6600 x 2406.